AN

ANSWER

TO THE

EIGHTH CHAPTER

OF THE

Repzelenter's

SECOND PART.

In the First

DIALOGUE

Between Him and His

Lay-Friend.

LICENSED,

March 1. 1686.

LONDON:

Printed for *William Rogers*, at the *Sun* over-against St. *Dunstan's* Church, in *Fleetstreet*. MDCLXXXVII.

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Lay-friend,

COme Sir, without farther Ceremony, why does not your Church allow *Vulgar Heads* to read the Scriptures?

Repreſenter. Not becauſe we fear there are any diſcoveries to be made of *Errors* and *Follies* in our Religion: For *there's no College, Univerſity, Community or Place of Learning* amongſt us, *but where the Scriptures are publickly read and expounded.*

L. That is to ſay, ſo much is *read publickly* as is convenient, and that which is read, is as conveniently *expounded.* Come, come, you are too baſhful upon this occaſion: E'ne ſay, that the Bible may be freely read by any Body in thoſe your *Places of Learning.* 'Twixt Friends, indeed there's no ſuch thing. But no matter for that; I will ſuppoſe it for once, and give you leave to make your beſt on't.

R. I will alſo reſerve your Suppoſition to ſome other time. At preſent, I ſay, that if we were *Conſcious* of contradicting the Scriptures, Scholars of all Men ſhould not be permitted by us to read the Scriptures; for 'tis more *likely they ſhould make this diſcovery in their reading the Bible, than the Vulgar. Are the Errors and Follies of Popery ſuch, that of neceſſity a man muſt be a Blockhead to underſtand them?*

L. No, but they are ſuch as I think a Blockhead may underſtand them, if he be not an extraordinary Blockhead.

R. A little good Manners, Friend, would not do amiſs; are we ſuch Blockheads with you then?

L. No, no, you have ſome Learned, and many ſhrew'd Heads amongſt you. My meaning is, that it requires neither Learning nor Cunning, to find that your Religion, and that of the Bible, are in ſeveral things contrary to one another. But ſince you kindle ſo faſt, why do you inſinuate that none but *Mechanicks and*

Apronstrings make the discovery? Are we all of this Church, a company of Mechanicks and Apronstrings, or *Blockheads* at least?

R. Not so fast; I meant only, that the Learned Men of *our* Communion could not make the discovery.

L. Then your meaning was little to the purpose. And now, since you have given the occasion, I must tell you, that we have very many *Priests* and *Laymen*, that can give as good an account of their Studies as any of the very best that you can bring. And I believe the World takes notice of it too.

R. What a blustring, huffing Champion for the Church of *England*, is this Lay-friend of mine! why, sure thou takest thy self to be one of the Learned *Laity*, that thou talkest so bravely of the Church of *England* Learning.

L. No truly, I am content to be put down amongst your Blockheads; only remember to write, that the *Blockhead* is not afraid of the *Representer*. Wherefore to go on, they are not *Mechanicks* and *Apronstrings* only, but as Learned Men as the World has any, who discover your Errors by the Scriptures: and it was a poor mean Fallacy of yours to dissemble it. We have Mechanicks amongst us, that have not only more honesty, but more wit than this comes to.

R. Thou art, I tell thee once again, a very quarrelsome, arrogant Member of thy Church; but for all that, thou shalt be my Lay-friend still, and with all my heart conceit thy self as wise as *Solomon*; Only shew a little of thy Wit now, and come to the Business. Dost thou think that our Church would allow the Scriptures to so many Learned Men as we have, if our Religion were in any thing contrary to the Scriptures? Consider a little with thy self, how 'tis possible that these Learned Men should not see it, if it were so.

L. How do you know that they do not see it? May they not see it, and yet be wise enough to say nothing of it?

R. Very well! And *is it probable then, that every man amongst the Papists, no sooner becomes a Scholar, but he turns Atheist?*

L. And is it probable then, that every man amongst the *Protestants*,

teſtants, no ſooner becomes a *Scholar*, but he turns *Atheiſt*?

R. What an impertinent queſtion was that? Did I ever ſay *thus*?

L. Then there is one impertinent queſtion for another; for we never ſaid *ſo*. But let me try whether I can ask a pertinent queſtion or not. Do not you think 'tis very plain that the Doctrines of your Church, which we oppoſe, are not contrary to the Scripures? Anſwer me that.

R. And ſo I will, if it be but to ſee what thou wilt make of it. I think 'tis plain enough.

L. Now 'tis more likely that Learned Men ſhould diſcover what is to be diſcover'd in the Scriptures, than that Mechanicks and Apronſtrings ſhould.

R. I have already ſaid it; and to talk in thy ſtrain, make thy beſt on't.

L. I have but one thing more to add, and do you make the worſt on't. You reckon that we muſt probably conclude your Learned Men to be Atheiſts, if we ſuppoſe that they diſcover your Religion to be contrary to the Scriptures, and will yet ſay nothing of it. And now I think you cannot but ſee that you alſo muſt *probably* ſuppoſe our Learned Men to be Atheiſts, if they diſcover that your Religion is *not* contrary to the Scriptures, and will yet bear the World in hand, that it is.

R. Hold, hold. But may be the caſe is not the ſame.

L. Then the caſe is alter'd, quoth *Ployden*. But you would do your Lay-friend no ſmall Courteſie to ſhew him the difference. Pray, why ſhould not our Learned men be as good at making Diſcoveries, as yours?

R. Nay, if you will needs prove your Learned men to be Atheiſts, who can help it?

L. Muſt they be *Atheiſts* then on one ſide or t'other? However my queſtion has by this time gain'd a little pertinence; and may deſerve to be conſider'd.

R. Haſt thou forgot the Proverb? That *a Fool may ask more Queſtions than a wiſe man can Anſwer*?

L. And yet I have anſwer'd yours; and that without ſaying, either

either that your Learned Men are probably Atheists, or probably not.

R. Nay, I confess, a question wisely avoided, shews more Discretion, than a question foolishly answer'd. But betwixt you and me, my question is not answer'd yet.

L. Say you so? Why, if you put me to it, it shall go hard but I will avoid it once more; and two wise avoidings, may for ought I know go for one wise Answer, according to another Proverb, *That two Foils makes a Fall.* Have you never heard of the Advice given to Pope *Julius* 3*d*, by some Bishops that sat at *Bononia*, in order to the support of the *Roman See*, as *Vergerius* has it?

R. It seems you have by your asking. Pray, remember that you are avoiding an answer to my question.

L. I will avoid it as fast as I can. If you look into *Consil. de stabil. Rom. Sede.* you will go near to find this *Advice* given: That, *as little of the Gospel might be read as was possible.* I shall not trouble you with all that they say to this purpose, but make hast to their Reason for this Advice: *In truth*, say they, *if one diligently considers it* (as you know *Scholars* can do) *and compares it with what is done in our Churches, he will find them very contrary to each other, and our very Doctrine not only to be different from it, but inconsistent with it.*

R. You do not intend to say, now at last—what do you mean by this Sir?

L. So, so. I shall be drawn into a snare, if I do not look better to my self. No Sir, I intended only to shew that that same question which we have been so long upon, might as well have been spar'd. That's all.

R. 'Tis well that's all, Sir. And as we met, so now let us part Friends.

L. Nay, and if we be Friends, we'l think of *Bononia* no more, and so go on to the end of the Chapter.

R. With all my heart Friend. And now I must tell ye, that *I never met with any one, that left our Communion by reading and following the Word of God.*

L. Right Sir. For 'tis not the Word of God, but the *conceptions*

tions or imaginations that a man has upon reading the Word of God, that carries him away from you.

R. Now I proteſt thou begin'ſt to ſpeak like a man of underſtanding.

L. For inſtance, A man reads in 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lords death till he come.* And then there comes a certain *conception* or *imagination* into his head, that what is eaten in the Lords-Supper is *Bread*; and that there is a *Cup* to be drank of, as well as Bread to be eaten; and by that time that he has read ſome half a dozen places more to the ſame purpoſe, his imagination works ſo ſtrongly againſt *Tranſubſtantiation*, and the *half Communion*, that next night he can hardly ſleep for it.

R. Fiddle faddle, what a prating do'ſt thou make of one inſtance? Have I not ſaid, that if the Vulgar be permitted to read the Bible, there will or may be *ſo many different words of God, as there are heads* amongſt them?

L. And you ſaid too, *That the people benefit by the Scriptures, not by laying the Bible upon their heads, and ſo underſtanding it, but by the ſenſe and meaning in which they underſtand it.* For if that man we ſpake of before, had never done any thing with the Bible but laid it upon his *head*, and ſo had only *ſtood under it*, no harm had follow'd: But he muſt needs open it, and read the words, to come to the ſenſe and meaning in which they are to be *underſtood*; and it was this that made all the miſchief.

R. And is it not a miſchief, prithee, to have *ſo many Heads, ſo many Bibles?*

L. Take one Text for inſtance, and let it be, *This is my Body.* You ſay there muſt needs be about ſo many interpretations of this place as there are heads in the vulgar amongſt us. And now muſt I go with *Pen, Ink and Paper*, as you adviſe, to take the ſenſe of every vulgar head that comes to the Pariſh Church to which I belong. But what if I ſhould find them to be all of a mind, and then carry the Pariſh harmony upon this Text, to the Licenſer, to be *ſet forward* with an

Imprima-

Imprimatur, as you were ſpeaking? I fancy the Book would be a pretty Book, and ſell very well.

R. Thou think'ſt this was wiſely ſaid now. Did I ſpeak of a ſingle Text, or of the whole Bible?

L. I cry you mercy, your meaning then was that they would not interpret the *whole* Bible alike. Pray do your Learned men do ſo? Here is the inconvenience then of letting vulgar heads have the Bible, that there will be ſo many *vulgar heads*, ſo many *Bibles*: But then there may be ſo many Bibles as you have *learned heads* amongſt you, and there is no harm at all in that. But pray tell me, when our Saviour bad the *Jews ſearch the Scriptures*, was he ſenſible, or not, of this inconvenience your Church is ſo much aware of? Was St. *Peter* to blame to commend the Chriſtians of his days for *taking heed to the word of Propheſie*? Was St. *Chryſoſtom* a child, and the Fathers before him children, to exhort Chriſtian people, diligently to read the Scriptures? Your Church certainly is very wiſe, to be wiſer than the Fathers, than the Apoſtles, nay than our Saviour himſelf; and ſhe has very great Authority if ſhe can for the avoiding of *inconveniences*, countermand what God has commanded. But you will have all theſe things urg'd by a better hand, I gueſs, that will conſider not only what you have ſaid here, but your other Chapters alſo upon this argument.

R. I am very glad on't, for to talk with thee, is but to loſe time. When I ſee any ſenſe written againſt my three Chapters, I will not fail to anſwer it.

L. Juſt as you reply'd to the Learned Anſwerer of the *Papiſt Miſrepreſented and Repreſented*, by dropping in effect the whole Controverſie. Juſt as you anſwer'd the *Proteſtant Preface* to the *wholeſome advices*, &c. by cavilling at a digreſſion or two, and ſaying never a word to the matter of *Fact*, which was the ſubject both of the *Preface* and the *Book*. And juſt as you have now reply'd to my *Letter*, in which I had not only fully conſider'd all your Objections wherein I was particularly concern'd, but your whole Fourth Chapter it ſelf, where you pretended that yours is the Catholick Church, and that

you

you have had a ſucceſſion of Paſtors, &c. but I have not had one word offer'd for my ſatisfaction in theſe Points, tho' they are in themſelves very material, and you were not a little concern'd to defend what you had ſaid about them; Your *Lay-friend* would be aſham'd of this ſhifting.

R. Thou perverſe man, have I not intimated that it was to no purpoſe to go about to inſtruct thee? Prithee whoſe words were thoſe, *I deſire to live no longer than I can, if not ſpeak, yet love and admire the Church of* England's *ſenſe?*

L. They were my words; and ſo were theſe, *I have vow'd to follow Truth and Charity where ever they lead me.*

R. Is it not plain then, thou didſt not *know thy own mind?*

L. It is plain that I did; for I was then perſwaded, and ſo I am ſtill, that in following the Church of *England*, I *follow Truth and Charity.* Pray do you think that you ſhall ever be a *Proteſtant* again?

R. No friend, I am reſolv'd to live and die a *Roman* Catholick.

L. Not right, or wrong, I hope. But at the ſame time that you are confident of being in the right way, you would not be aſham'd to ſay, that you would *follow Truth and Charity*, where ever they led you. I am as well aſſur'd that I am in the right, as you are confident that you are ſo. But if notwithſtanding this aſſurance, I am under a prevailing reſolution to follow *Truth and Charity*, though they ſhould lead me out of the way wherein I now am; and you ſhould with your confidence chance to be otherwiſe reſolv'd, I will make bold to ſay, that in this reſpect the Lay-man is the better man, and the better Chriſtian. But the very truth is, you were in pain for an excuſe to avoid the anſwering of the firſt part of my Letter, and you thought you had found one.

R. Thy vanity is ſo intollerable that I wonder at my own patience to hear thee talk thus. Didſt thou not deſire without *condition or reſerve, to die, rather than move one ſtep from whence thou ſtandeſt?*

L. No, there was a plain reſerve expreſt, *viz.* that of *Following Truth and Charity*; and this you have in effect confeſt

by ſaying that I came *with vow'd Docility in one hand, and ſturdy preſumption in the other.* Preſumption! of what I pray, but of this, that I am in the right way to Heaven? and the more ſturdy my preſumption of this was, the more charity it had been in you to have broke it by the force of your Reaſon, if you could. And now if you pleaſe, a word or two, whether *Papiſts* are not on the *uncharitable ſide.*

R. Indeed we have your *ſay-ſo for it, inſtead of a Proof.*

L. There is only your *ſay-ſo* that Proof is wanting; now why may not a Lay-man's *ſay-ſo* with Proof, weigh againſt a Repreſenter's *ſay-ſo* without it? How ſhould a man prove a Point of Doctrine upon your Authors, better than by ſuch Teſtimonies out of them, as I produced in my Letter, *pag.* 7.? And for any thing you have yet ſaid, and I believe can ſay, to clear your Party of damning all *Proteſtants*, that one Argument alone, which I produced againſt you, *p.* 9. will remain an Invincible proof of *Proteſtants* Charity, and *Papiſts* want of it. Mark it Repreſenter, Our Charity to you, and your want of it to us, has furniſhed your Party with an Argument to perſwade ſilly people to be of your Church, becauſe there's a poſſibility of Salvation there, by the Confeſſion of both Parties: You have neither ſaid that your men have not us'd this Argument, nor promis'd that they ſhall forbear it hereafter; and yet with a boldneſs peculiar to your ſelf, you would face us down, That *Proteſtants come not an ace behind Papiſts in Uncharitableneſs.* Take notice Sir, that you have offer'd never a Word to this Point, and I am now ſo well acquainted with your way, that I believe you never will.

R. I wonder at thy Confidence, *Lay-friend!* Do not I ſay, That *it is the common Opinion of Modern and Ancient Schoolmen, that Salvation is poſſible for ſuch, as through Invincible Ignorance remain ſeparate from the Church?*

L. When you have produc'd theſe Schoolmen, they ſhall be allow'd to ſpeak for themſelves, and for no body elſe; to be ſure not for thoſe that uſe the forementioned Argument, whether they be the Writers that I mentioned, or the preſent Talkers that

that run up and down Town and Country, threatning the *Vulgar Heads* amongſt us, with unavoidable Damnation.

R. I tell thee, of *all thoſe who pronounce ſo ſeverely againſt Proteſtants*, that 'tis *againſt Proteſtants remaining ſuch, as thou haſt worded it*, p. 8. that is, *obſtinately and pertinaciouſly remaining ſuch.*

L. I think it is now my turn to wonder at my own Patience: What Confidence can be equal to this! Did I, or could I mean by Proteſtants *remaining ſuch*, *Proteſtants* obſtinately and pertinaciouſly continuing ſuch? But by this time it is as evident as words can make any thing, that you and your Party (if you rightly repreſent them) damn all *Proteſtants remaining ſuch*, without exception.

R. No, we except thoſe that can make the Excuſe of *Invincible Ignorance.*

L. That is to ſay, you except none at all, in as much as all Proteſtants remaining ſuch, are, with you, *obſtinate* and *pertinacious*; and I would know of you, Whether obſtinate Hereticks can plead Invincible Ignorance? To deal plainly, I have found your *Charity* and your *Sincerity* to be much at one; but becauſe, if it be poſſible, I would ſift you to the bottom in this matter, pray will you think of giving me a plain, direct, and full anſwer to theſe Queſtions.

1. What you mean by *Invincible Ignorance*, if you think there is ſuch a thing?

2. Whether it be poſſible for Proteſtants *remaining ſuch* to the laſt, to dye in *Invincible Ignorance*, or whether the very being of a Proteſtant, does not, according to you, imply *obſtinate and pertinacious continuing in Error and Schiſm?*

3. If it does imply *obſtinacy*, whether it does not exclude the Plea of *Invincible Ignorance?*

4. If no *Proteſtant*, according to you, can be *Invincibly ignorant*, what becomes of your Charity?

5. If *Proteſtants* may live and die *invincibly ignorant*, what comes of your Argument; I mean that Argument mentioned in my *Letter*, which no provocation will make you take notice of?

Anſwer

Answer me these questions like a man that designs to have Truth, and not a Party, and therefore like one that is not afraid to be understood. In the mean time I have just cause to say, that *the two first of Popery* I mention'd with respect to Damning or not Damning us, are as I now see, founded only upon your new pretence of that Charity for us which in reality there is nothing of. *If the Papists have been made odious these hundred years for their uncharitableness to Protestants*, you are going on to make them *odious* still for the same *uncharitableness*; and the *disguise* of Charity which you have put on to *amuse the people*, tho' it was put on but t'other day, is *worn off* already, and the *Representer* with his new Popery appears as uncharitable as the maintainers of the *Old*.

As to your Reflection upon my *Friends*, by whom I suppose, you mean the honest and Learned Clergy of this Church, *That they are put to a hard shift to talk of New Popery*; it is easie to say, that if you had not been put to a hard shift to defend the *Old*, there had been no occasion given to talk of the *New*. Methinks you should be afraid to mention the difference betwixt the Old and the New, when you are so indebted to us about the Defence of the Bishop of *Meaux*'s Exposition, and the first part of the *Papist Misrepresented and Represented*. We confess that in respect of your practices there is no occasion for this distinction between *Old and New Popery*, but in respect of your present pretences, there is. For he that looks upon the false Colours that you have lately laid upon your Cause, would either believe that there's a change made amongst you, tho' we know there is none, and some little Reformation, tho' indeed nothing is mended; or else that we had charg'd you falsely all along; which no body can believe that either understands your practices abroad, or can read your established Offices, or has capacity to understand how the Controversies were stated between your Ancestors and ours at home.

Now for what remains, pray when you write next, have a care of supposing *a good opinion of the Papists to be a part of my Religion*, unless you confess at the same time that it is part of my Religion to have *no good opinion of Popery*. As for the occasion of my requiring an *Infallible assurance* in the place to which you refer, I confess a great deal less will serve my turn; only I talked to you as men sometimes do to Artists, in their own Terms. But for that Reflection, that I have but a *Fallible persuasion for my Religion*, I will compare the Grounds of my Persuasion with the Grounds of yours when you please. In a word, if you were to convert *Heathens* upon any other Grounds than those that support the Faith of *Protestants*, you would find it as difficult a matter to make Converts to *Christianity*, as you find it to convert us to *Popery*. And so farewell till we meet again, which I guess will not be in haste, if you can help it.

FINIS.